



Good Morning. Thank you for the opportunity to speak to you today.

My challenge as I sit before you is to convince you of the critical importance of the programming that Visiting Nurse Services of Iowa is providing for children and families. The reinstatement of the dollars in the Senate HHS Appropriation Bill to the following programs is essential to their ability to operate and serve families. The programs are ABCDII, Outreach Funding, Family Planning, Child Care Quality Dollars, and Iowa System of Care Dollars. The programming I am going to highlight received cuts in the House Appropriation Bill to funding that would threaten the very essence of the programs ability to function. I will give you a “down and dirty” overview of the programs and an extremely condensed client story to illustrate the program impact to vulnerable Iowans. It is these stories or client results that are the final outcome of your appropriation process.

Outreach

Direct outreach for the hawk-I and Medicaid program involves assisting those who desperately need public health insurance programs but are least equipped to easily access and retain them. In addition to be invaluable to families, outreach specialists assist the Department of Human Services by reducing the number of denials and repeat applications. An example of families helped: Mom, Dad, 3 children; both parents work for a delicatessen; Dad earns \$12/hr and 10 hours overtime per week. Mom work full time for almost \$10/hr. Health insurance is available, but they cannot afford it. They have bills from a past hospitalization of one of the children. Outreach was able to get all three children approved for hawk-i.

Family Planning

This programs helps low-income individuals access needed reproductive health services. They are able to receive critical screening services for example for cervical or breast cancer. From October 2009-October 2010, we saw 228 family planning clients. 194 of them were at 100-132% of poverty. 31 were 133-200% of the FPL. Three were above 200%. Clients receive education and services that assist them to prevent or delay an untimely pregnancy. Catherine’s story gives you a glimpse of the assistance. “You all have a great program, keep up the good work! Family planning was very beneficial to me while I was unemployed and without insurance. Because of the great service and friendly helpful staff I will continue to entrust my care with you now that I am on my feet a bit more”.

ABCDII, 1st Five Healthy Mental Development

This program focuses on child development 0-5. Providers identify children at risk and through 1st Five Care Coordinators link children to needed community resources. Referrals are made for developmental delays, speech delay and maternal depression.

This program was recognized by The Commonwealth Foundation as one of the nation's top five programs of care coordination for children and families.

System of Care dollars

VNS of Iowa contracts with Orchard Place to provide services through Central Iowa System of Care dollars. This story illustrates both positive client outcomes and the cost effectiveness of the programming for children with serious mental health issues. The Central Iowa System of Care has worked with the Polk County Attorney's office to reduce committals. A sixteen year old boy had been taken to a youth shelter after his mother was extremely frustrated with his aggressive behavior. He had been hospitalized for aggressive behavior. His mother wanted him to stay long term at a shelter to give him a message. He was also on a waiting list for a Psychiatric Medical Institution for Children. The System of Care Project Supervisor received a call from the PC Attorney's Office for someone to meet with the parent.

The situation was resolved quickly. Both agreed they wanted him to remain in the home but needed services. Mother and son both received Functional Family Therapy Both needed to make changes in their relationship. Had System of Care not intervened, the boy would have remained at the shelter for a month and then gone to a Psychiatric Medical Institution for Children.

Child Care Quality Funding

Iowa's children are in child care. We rank among the highest in the nation with children under 6 whose parents are in the labor force. Iowa's children deserve being cared for in a safe and supportive quality environment. The Quality Dollars support Healthy Child Care Iowa through the Department of Public Health which provide training for Child Care Nurse Consultants. The funding also supports the Quality Rating System which utilizes the Child Care Nurse Consultants.

I hope I have given you a glimpse of the critical services these programs funds provide to Iowa families.

Thank you.

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